

The Africanized honey bee (AHB) is a potential insect pest. AHB has not yet been found in Delaware. The Plant Industries staff maintains pheromone lure “bait” hives at various locations along the 14 miles of coastal anchorage area. At this time, pheromone lure “traps” are the only technology available for intercepting swarms. The traps collect both AHB and the European honey bees. A diagnostic sampling procedure is used to determine the ancestry of the honey bee.



The Delaware Department of
Agriculture's Plant Industries
Apiary Program Staff provides:

Inspection & Certification of
Bee Colonies

Beekeeping Education &
Promotion



Delaware Department of
Agriculture

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Apiary Program

Honey bees are truly social insects. As many as 80,000 bees live in a well-ordered family called a colony. Each family member performs specific functions that are necessary for the survival of the colony. Because of this social behavior, honey bee disease and parasites can be rapidly transmitted to other bees, and to other bee colonies. Often, these diseases and parasites are spread to bee colonies located several miles away.

The **apiary inspection and regulation** program is designed to prevent the introduction or establishment of honey bee diseases, parasites, or undesirable races of honey bees. Apiary inspection is the only way to accurately assess the health of the bee colony. Honey bee colonies and apiary locations must be registered annually with the Delaware Department of Agriculture.

In addition, the **interstate transportation** of bee colonies is a regulated activity. Prior to transporting any live bees or used beekeeping equipment into Delaware, an entry permit must be obtained from the Department of Agriculture. Permits are issued following receipt of an inspection certificate from the state of origin.

In addition to regulatory inspections, Plant Industries' apiary inspection staff provides **beekeeping education and promotion programs**. Each year hundreds of school students are introduced to this unique facet of agriculture and nature. Programs are provided for schools, 4-H and scout meetings, and other types of civic groups. Technical workshops are provided several times each year for both beginners and accomplished beekeepers. Demonstrations include disease identification and prevention, seasonal management, honey bee

Honey bees, as their name implies, produce **honey**. The National Honey Board estimates that, in the United States, 2,900,000 colonies of bees produce 115,000 tons of honey each year. Amazingly, this is only a small portion of the honey bees' actual value. Honey bees are responsible for the **pollination** of about one third of all food crops produced in the United States. The value of this service alone far exceeds the value of the honey produced. In Delaware, honey bees are responsible for the pollination of \$10 million worth of fruit and vegetables, at the wholesale level.

